

Workforce Development Council

Meeting Minutes June 12, 2007

VYCC Barn, Richmond

Attendees: Frank Cioffi, WDC Chair; Chip Evans Executive Director, WDC; Cindy LaWare, Agency of Human Services; Kay Charron, Department of Education; Lynn Vera, Center for Technology, Essex; Mike Deweese, Chittenden Central Supervisory Union; Richard Cate, Department of Education; Senator Don Collins; Hal Cohen, Central Vermont Community Action Council; Chris Loso, Loso's Professional Janitorial Services; Pat Moulton Powden, Vermont Department of Labor; Representative Kathy Keenan; Representative Dave Potter; Jeffrey Wimette, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; Neil Gruber, Helen Porter Healthcare; Maynard McLaughlin, Bread Loaf Corp.; Ron Rabideau, Teamsters Local 597; Stan Walker, Berlin Mall; Gretchen Babcock, representing Karen Nystrom Meyer, UVM; Amy Whitehorne, representing Donald Vickers, Vermont Student Assistance Corp.; Mary Linterman, DEW Construction Co.; Jim Pratt, Cabot Creamery Coop. Inc.; Tracy Maclean, representing Mark Douglas, Northlands Job Corps Ctr.; Pat Elmer, Vermont Associates; Tom James, State Board of Education; Mike Bertrand, representing Governor Douglas; Tim Donovan, Community College of Vermont; Lindsey Wetmiller, VT Chamber of Commerce; Lucie Garand, VAHHS; Alice Maynard, DMH; David Coughlin, Windham Regional WIB; David Binch, VITC; Representative Michelle Kupersmith; Representative Peter Peltz; Pauline Singley, Addison County WIB; Mike Quinn, Department of Economic Development; Nancy Burzon, Rutland County WIB.

Frank Cioffi, Chair of the Council, called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. He offered his thanks for work done on the Next Generation bill (Act 46) to the legislators involved; Representative Michelle Kupersmith, Representative Mike Consejo, Representative Peter Peltz, Senator Hinda Miller, Representative Warren Kitzmiller, Senator Dave Potter, Representative Kathleen Keenan, Senator Don Collins, Senator Kevin Mullin, Senator Vince Illuzzi and Representative Jim Masland. Frank also thanked Tom James, Chair of the State Board of Education, Mike Bertrand, Deputy Secretary of Administration, and Secretary of Human Services, Cindy LaWare for their participation in today's meeting. Frank called for a motion to approve the minutes of the December '06 meeting. Pat Moulton so moved and was seconded by Kevin Dorn.

Economic Development & the Next Generation:

Frank introduced Mike Quinn, Commissioner of Economic Development. Mike provided an overview of the Growing Vermont's Next Generation Workforce: Discovery Report. The report was commissioned by the Department of Economic Development to evaluate the challenges the State faces in workforce development. It was released in April of 2007. The full report with extensive supporting data is available at www.thinkvermont.com.

The report notes that a comparison of projected job creation and population growth suggests that as early as 2012 demand for workers at the national level will outstrip supply. This trend is particularly acute in New England. As a result, the retention and recruitment of talent has become a significant concern for

cities and states across the country. This situation reflects a number of national trends. Chief among them is the aging of baby boomers and the movement of the “baby bust” generation into the labor force. This demographic shift means that employers face labor shortages that will be crippling in some areas in the near term. Increased competition for labor means that the attraction and retention of talent should be an important part of any economic strategy.

These trends are even more pronounced in rural areas. An analysis of county population growth reveals that roughly three out of five rural counties in the U.S. (nearly 60 percent) have experienced population loss in the first part of this decade. By contrast, less than one in five metropolitan counties (17 percent) lost residents during the same period. This has important implications for Vermont.

The concept of talent means more than a skilled workforce. It means recruiting talented people as well as cultivating the current talent pool represented by students. It means ensuring that the employees and companies that have been responsible for Vermont’s growth see a reason to remain in the state or return to the state after they have left and gained valuable experience.

The analysis conducted to date suggests Vermont could have success with a targeted recruitment initiative. This success, however, will be contingent upon mitigating perceived obstacles and leveraging attractive aspects of the State, such as the strong higher education network and the attractive lifestyle. Understanding the next generation’s relationship with work should inform economic development strategy around entrepreneurship and the selection of target industries. Additional insights regarding market segmentation will be published under separate cover.

Review of Act 46 - The Next Generation Legislation:

Chip Evans, gave an orientation to Act 146. He pointed out the strong economic development connection articulated in the bill, and noted that it was actively supported by both the in the Commerce / Economic Development Committees as well as the Education Committees. He reviewed the various workforce development programs included in the bill and noted that significant resources were also provided for dual enrollment, college scholarships and targeted loan forgiveness. Elements of the bill were selected for discussion by groups later in the meeting.

Chip introduced John O’Kane, Community Relations Director for IBM and member of the WDC’s Executive Committee, as facilitator of a panel of Legislators. John introduced Senator Don Collins, Senator Hinda Miller, and Representative Michelle Kupersmith. John commented that this is more of a journey than an event and that it is a milestone for Vermont. He also gave credit to Governor Douglas for his proposal for college scholarships. The panelists were each asked to share their perspectives on the bill.

The first panelist to speak was Representative Michelle Kupersmith. She described how the bill came out of the legislature. She stated the bill would not have ended up looking the way it does if not for the efforts of Chip Evans, Frank Cioffi and Representative Pat McDonald. They created the confidence to structure the bill. Representative Kupersmith stated this was treated as an economic development bill. The committee took on the implementation of the Next Generation Commission findings. Her committee

looked very closely at the work of the Next Generation Commission. She pointed out that the spending in the bill is actually a small amount of money given the task at hand. Vermont has strong demand for workers that is created by businesses anticipating growth, and that we need to respond to immediately. She observed that legislators are hearing from individual workers around the state that they can't qualify for the good jobs that are available. They want and need the opportunity, but the training opportunities have been lacking. Business's need training assistance. Business's that are doing well have the choice to leave Vermont if we do not provide the workforce that can keep them here.

John O'Kane then introduced Senator Hinda Miller. Senator Miller She stated that the money is the easy part. Testimony given through Senate Economic Development from workforce training vendors, educators, and our business's is that we already have the programs that work, but that the resource levels are not adequate to get the job done. She pointed out that much of the infrastructure is also in place, including the Workforce Development Council itself. Her committee helped dedicate flexible resources. Resources went into the preexisting programs such as the WET fund and the Vermont Training Program.

The next challenge, she believes, is to create the strategies and objectives of our workforce development system. We need to have the ability to hold our government agencies and training providers accountable. The New Workforce Development Leadership Committee of the WDC needs to ask agencies on an annual basis; how did you perform to our goals and objectives for economic development, job creation and job training? That has not happened before. The overlap in services also needs to be looked at. Nevertheless, there is quality in the system now. The Workforce Leadership Committee was created to address this need. The other area which the Sustainable Funding Committee was created to look into is long term funding. They are asked to come back to legislature after looking at other states and countries with suggestions on how to we maintain and expand these programs.

Senator Don Collins was then introduced by John. Senator Collins started out by saying things don't happen because of 3 or 4 Legislators. It takes a group effort. The idea of putting together a "package" that would address employment needs and the needs of students started with a phone call after the election in November and December of 2006. The concept of "Promise Scholarships" came up. Technical Education needs a spotlight shining on it. Public perception needs to rise to equal the level that of opportunities that the Tech centers now provide. We need to change the perception of Tech Ed in the minds of young people. The "Promise Scholarship" concept isn't just for people going to 4 year colleges. Senator Collins made it clear that it begins with the middle school students. These students need to be made aware of the opportunities to further their education and training through tech schools and summer programs.

Workforce Leadership Committee:

At 3:00 Frank introduced Commission of the Vermont Department of Labor, Pat Mouton Powden. Commissioner Powden will be leading the Workforce Leadership Committee. Pat observed that Vermont has always had a good workforce. We have the talent in Vermont and are beginning to have the tools to match the talent with the constantly changing needs of the workplace. The Leadership Committee will

consist of the Secretary of Human Services, Cindy LaWare, Commissioner of Economic Development, Mike Quinn, Commissioner of Education, Richard Cate, and four business members from the Workforce Development Council and Higher Education community appointed by the Governor.

Commissioner Moulton Powden pointed out that there are several key tasks assigned to this committee in the law. The first one being to “develop a limited number of overarching goals and challenging measurable criteria for the workforce development system that supports the creation of good jobs to build and retain a strong, appropriate, and sustainable economic environment in Vermont”.

The Commissioner then explained the task of the Sustainable Workforce Funding Committees. This is a one-time committee asked to identify funding strategies for the workforce development programs into the future and to report back to the Legislature and Governor. The Committee will consist of eight members. Three business members of the Workforce Development Council, one business representative appointed by the Senate pro-temp, one by the Speaker, and three business members representing business organizations who will be appointed by the Governor.

Governor's Comments:

The Governor briefly addressed the meeting, thanking the Legislators for their work and pointing out to the Council the great opportunity that Act 46 represents for Vermont's workers, employers and overall economy. The Governor thanked Frank Cioffi Chair of the Workforce Development Council, for his leadership, Chip Evans, Executive Director of the Council, for his hard work and Commissioner Powden for her efforts. The Governor stated the bill was a very important step forward for our state. The Governor went over the funds that were allocated for various programs, particularly the internship program. He said it was critical to have these funds available to give younger adults and youths the opportunity to further their educations.

Breakout Session:

Chip Evans, reviewed the agenda for the breakout groups. He introduced the group facilitators; Andy Crossman, Wyeth Pharmaceuticals', Nancy Burzon, Coordinator for the Rutland Workforce Board, Lynn Vera, Essex Technical Center and Pixie Loomis of Vermont Adult Learning. Chip was also a group facilitator.

At 4:15 the groups returned with the reports of their findings. The findings were reviewed by the assigned facilitator. A copy of the group's findings is attached.

Workforce Development Council Meeting

June 12, 2007 Monitor Barn, Richmond

~ Work Session Notes ~

Comments, Clarifications and Additions are Welcome

Topic 1 - Next Generation Leadership Committee - Chip Evans

Accountability and Outcomes, Possible State-Level Measures

- 20,000 ft. (not 5,000 ft.) economic measures:
- Job creation
- Job quality, income, or earnings in strategic sectors
- Change in types of jobs
- Total employment
- Growth in training participation
- Duration of lay offs- UI
- Wage Growth
- Employment or wage growth of “new and emerging” sectors
- High value add jobs

Training / Retraining Process Measures:

- Number of workers in incumbent training
- Number of UI recipients receiving training
- ROI of increased State tax revenues from trainee wage increases

Agency Collaboration Development Measures:

- Convergence of agency and or program goals and activities
- Reduction of duplication / increase collaboration
- Joint funding of training projects
- Extent of agency support for, and utilization of WIBs

Educational Institution Measures:

- High school students with career plans
- Measure – by a standard- youth readiness for college and work
- High School completion
- Student outcomes, college entry and completion, job outcomes
- Internship completion and in targeted industries

- Youth entering emerging sectors
- Students enrolled in tech ed programs
- Students enrolled in alternative HS completion programs
- Junior achievement for youth to learn how to run business and R.E.A.L.

Subjective Measures:

- Employer satisfaction with workforce quality
- Focus on data that responds to myths and perceptions – no good jobs here etc.
- Response to the needs of small emerging sectors - be nimble
- Measure workforce in “critical mass” sectors green technologies, etc
- Measure leverage of the e-state initiative

Topic 2 - WETF Training Grants - Andy Crossman

Implementation, What to Keep in Mind:

- Don't forget those with barriers
- Push to replicate success and move it around the State
- Support employer community (trade assoc.) through the process. Large and small
- Leveraging all resources in state to support sector objectives
- Use local WIBs for assessment of needs and programs performance and ensure the loop is closed.

WDC Role:

- Ensuring process runs smoothly for WIB
- Initiate Efficiencies between WETF & VTP
- Identify and resolve duplication
- Process facilitate export or transfer of best practices
- Standards for local WIB performance and reporting
- Training investments in new job creation vs. incumbent worker
- Help WIBs and programs with needs assessment prioritization
- Leverage exosting resources to help those with barriers to be successful

Success Measurement:

- New jobs – placement at end of training
- Higher wages
- Moving people out of econ. assist.
- Increased private funds and investment from employers
- Up the percentage of business investment in training
- Replicability of successful training
- Participant satisfaction survey
- Long-term study, “where are they now?”
- Private sector dollars invested and participation on WIBs etc.

WDC / WIB Interaction and Support:

- WIBs need technical support from WDC
- * Responsibilities and accountability of and from WIBs

- Support development of a Workforce plan in each WIB
- WDC help identify what weaker WIBs can do to build capacity
- Provide support for mentor relationships between stronger /weaker WIBS
- Link more formally to RDC's structure
- Create and force collaboration if WIBs expect support

Topic 3 - WETF Internship Grants - Nancy Burzon Facilitator

Implementation, What to Keep in Mind:

- Set policies to guide start up.
- Be as specific as possible - but allow some flexibility to respond locally.
- Establish guidelines for successful internship (student/employer roles)
- Guidelines checklist. Drive consistency.
- Outline the levels/tracks

WDC Role:

- Work through WIB's where they are working
- Bring up other WIBS-mentor them as needed
- Be a link/conduit (through) local WIBS for example to support; Career exploration, work-based experience, job shadows, post secondary, etc.
- Intentionally include state government as an employer partner
- Develop and support web site for internships (Lake Champ. WIB?)

Success Measurement:

- Set operating limitations/goals - sector specific, environmental, etc.
- Develop measurable results for grantees – report on internship created/fulfilled
- Sustainability requirements built into project design

WDC/WIB interactions:

- Set criteria for the internship grant (used by the WIBS for review process)
- Provide technical support, an “adopt a WIB” program. Establish personal connections/commitment

Topic 4 - Adult Technical Education - Lynn Vera Facilitator

Implementation, What to Keep in Mind:

- Getting people into training for jobs in the region is the most important goal.
- The position of Adult Coord. is critical to the outcomes of the program. The individual must be entrepreneurial and flexible.
- There is a wide variation place to place. VDOL and WDC should gather information on the programs in place before making decisions about how best to use these new funds.

- Competitive RFP's tend to favor established programs, those with grant writing ability, and larger regions where program delivery is more cost-effective, at the expense of people in more rural areas.
- Dividing the funds geographically has the advantage of ensuring that all citizens have access to programs, but does not reward performance. A blend?
- Competitive RFPs may not provide enough program stability year-to-year to attract and retain qualified and motivated staff. It takes time to get good at the job.
- Economic status of the individuals in the region should be a factor in funding distribution.
- Each area of state has different needs – WIB must be partner in developing adult education options.
- We need to develop a process to define an area's needs on an on-going basis. Who does what and how?
- Some adults have serious life responsibilities that must be accommodated (evening, weekends, on-line, intensive 5 day course during workers vacation, etc.)
- Single parents, training for sustainable wage,.
- Value of NT work > longer timelines, different measures of success
- Adult Tech Ed. should be part of an alternate route to high school diploma or workplace credential with credits. Need to connect with the Learning Works High School Completion Program.

Role of WDC:

- The Workforce Development Council should navigate the politics of assessing which Tech Centers have what and why.
- WIBs identify regions training needs through training priorities set by WDC.(what to do with low-performing WIBS?)
- Get input from WIBs. Be sure there are jobs – match training paid for grant with potential real jobs.
- WDC should link this program for adults to other elements in the bill, internships and alternative tech ed program. Expand to help appropriate adults to access those.
- Allow for different needs of geographical regions.

- Place a priority on actual training. Not support service for participants (access community partners for this).
- Support the development of Hybrid programs – face to face with online as part of study.
- VDOL Must be a partner with Economic Services. “Reach up” needs to be held accountable by WDC as referral source for adult at one stop career centers and social services.

Accountability and Outcomes:

- VDOL/WDC should work with the Centers to establish expectations for program performance.
- Increased numbers served. Enrolled in program, and completing program should relate to the amount of new money infused.
- Track increased earning power of participants through department of labor (ss# tracking)
- Crosswalk - does proposal met local WIB need priorities, and programs were set up with WIB input?
- Exit survey all participants to self-evaluate satisfaction, improvement in employment status, income, work prospects.
- System should recognize different levels of challenge/achievement for different populations. Example: Getting familiar with using computer software and internet may be necessary first step for some adults.
- Understanding the pathway to a good or better job may be a success for one population while placement in a better job could be a measure of success for another.

Topic 5 - Career and Alternative Workforce Ed. - Pixi Loomis

Implementation, What to Keep in Mind:

- KISS
- Need to include and engage employers
- Collaboration
- Replicability and sustainability
- Scalability and allowing for regional differences

WDC Role:

- Inventory who the potential providers are and what their specialities are.
- Define “youth” for purposes of this topic.
- Define best practices.
- Define who is to be served.
- Determine how to set criteria for distribution of funds.
- Review current legislation related/pertaining to this topic.
- Recommend collaboration and partnerships across the state.

Accountability and Outcomes:

- Success Measures:
 - High School diploma
 - Employment
 - Continued education
 - Gaining personal “assets
 - Reduced absentees
 - Completion of courses and credits

WDC / WIB Interaction and Support:

- WIBs should more directly connect to WDC
- WIBS are connected to providers and should be a source
- WIBS can provide support role in decision making with WDC